

The cellulose is enormously dilated by the weaker solvent, and expands the external membrane into beautiful beads, which are doubtless the result of the spiral vessels acting as ligatures at the points of strangulation; at the open end of a fibre it can be seen oozing out as a mucilaginous substance. The stronger solution bursts the beads, or dissolves all the cellulose into a homogeneous mass, amidst which the empty cuticular membrane and the spiral vessels remain nearly unacted upon.

The substance called medullary matter is seen occupying the axes of the fibres; it is nearly insoluble in the solvents. It may be well seen projecting from the open end of a fibre where the cellulose is exuding, and often remains *in situ* when the fibre has quite disappeared. It has many appearances of being a distinct body, but the author in some cases thought it might be only the thickened or modified inner cell-wall; in others it looked like a shrunk membrane, probably the dried-up primordial utricle. It is generally absent or indistinct in old cotton, or cotton which has been submitted to bleaching agents.—*Proceedings of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester*, April 1863.

On a singular Malformation of the Beak and Foot in the Young of the Domestic Fowl.

“DEAR SIR,—With this I send you the body of the chicken I spoke to you about, the beak and feet of which bear a close resemblance to those of a Parrot, and I beg your acceptance of it.

“It may perhaps be as well if I state the circumstances which, it has occurred to me, may account for this freak of nature. I had one of the Parrot tribe, which, on account of the noise it made, was frequently placed in the yard where I kept a breed of white bantam fowls. If any of these came near the Parrot’s cage to pick up the food it scattered, it became much enraged and screamed violently. Soon after this I set two hens on eggs, and in each brood I had one chicken of this strange form. My impression at the time was, and now is, that one of the hens had been frightened by the Parrot, and an effect thereby produced on some of her eggs.

“When I first mentioned it to you, I thought it had but three toes; on closer inspection I perceive there is a fourth toe; but the form of the foot still very closely resembles that of a Parrot.

“Yours very truly,
“W. M. HORN.”

“P.S. The Parrot was never let out of the cage, and was, I believe, a female.”

“J. E. Gray, Esq., British Museum.”

—*Proc. Zool. Soc.* Feb. 24, 1863.
31*

